

Rambo Reveals How Court Records Were Feloniously Altered Recently

Chamber Cut Off From City Subsidy Fund

(Continued from Page 1-A) any money to it for this fiscal year of 1941-42."

Mayor in Statement
Babeck and Murray endorsed Powell's motion. Councilman James Hitchcock voted "no" and Mayor Tom McGuire said:

"I have not talked to any member of the council about the Chamber of Commerce or its activities. To date we have not received the budget from the Chamber of Commerce or an outline of what they expect to do during the ensuing year. I will vote 'no' on cancelling the chamber appropriation because we are unacquainted as to what the chamber expects to do in the ensuing year. If any time in the future we want to change our vote we might do so."

Chamber of Commerce directors recommended a budget of \$7,145 for the fiscal 1941-42 to the city council this week with the recommendation that a portion of the secretary's and his assistant's salary be charged to the Municipal Bus System. It was explained that the Chamber secretary and his assistant devote approximately half their time to work in connection with the bus line. Should the council decide to allow a deduction of half the salaries of the chamber staff, it will bring the chamber budget down to approximately \$5,000, it was pointed out.

Maxine Steele Meets First Lady

(Continued from Page 1-A) then we saw motion pictures of the University.

"Mrs. Vincent Astor was there and did my eyes pop out! After the affair was over we drove back to Val-Kill and the chauffeur took me to the station. What a thrilling time I had! Mrs. Roosevelt is so charming and gracious that I was at ease at once. She had on some beautiful jewels and a beautiful blue dress that just matched her eyes. I won't ever forget it!"

Meets Phil Jensen
Miss Steele timed her eastern vacation to match the arrival of a ship on which Phillip Jensen, also of Torrance, is now an officer. They are engaged to be married and had, by long correspondence, planned to "do New York" together. However, Jensen's vessel was ordered to South America three days after it docked and so their holiday together was short.

The local girl's letter continues by reporting the plays she has seen in New York and she said she planned to end her stay there with a long tour of the harbor and a pilgrimage to the Statue of Liberty.

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Former Auditor Also Clarifies Water Purchase Account; Urges Council to Probe 'Doctored' Books

(Continued from Page 1-A) communism in schools and elsewhere," Rambo continued, "but I have never seen a more diabolical, dastardly attempt to sabotage the good name of a fellow citizen than I saw on the official court records."

The veteran auditor then interspersed his expose of the record alteration with a careful analysis of the municipal water department accounts wherein there is a \$35,000 account titled "unclassified." This account was made the subject of a statement by Councilman Powell who said May 27 "that is a lot of money not to be classified and I would like to know what it went for. I am intending to find out if I can."

"This is a difficult matter to explain for two reasons," Rambo continued. "First, if there is a serious and wholesome desire to learn the official records of the water company sale to the city, the matter is clear and reasonable to the extent that it does not need further explanation. Second, this explanation is receptive to three types of minds—the serious and intelligent which needs no detailed analysis, the mind too ignorant or too prejudiced to understand and the mind of those who don't want to understand from either ignorance or political expediency."

The auditor, however, went into the history of the sale of the Torrance Water, Light and Power company to the city in 1934, citing the difference in what the company wanted and the city's offer, \$175,000 as against \$125,000, and the final negotiations on a settlement of \$137,000 cash for all assets together with the city assuming \$6,400 in consumers' deposits.

Sum is Part of Water Purchase Price
"This purchase made no reference whatever to assets being itemized," Rambo pointed out. "Being auditors for the city it was our duty to set up an accounting system and the \$137,000 went on the records as an 'unclassified investment in water system.' Subsequent to that time, the city engineer and his consulting engineers filed their report which was accepted and approved. This was an inventory breaking down the assets into classifications to make a total of \$108,000 which represents a difference of about \$35,000 between the \$137,000 paid and the \$6,400 assumed in deposits.

"That \$35,000 was left in the account as an 'unclassified investment in the water system, because it could not have been spread over other accounts without violating accepted procedure of auditing—it would have been a false and fictitious valuation."

"Therefore, where did the \$35,000 go? It went to the Torrance Water, Light and Power Company as part of the purchase price of the water system," Rambo concluded.

"Good Will" and "Pink Elephants"
He then quoted from official council minutes a statement by Councilman Murray who said "his understanding was that \$13,000 was set up on the books for good will and organization and asked why, if such is the case, the \$35,000 had not been included in the 'good will' setup."

"There was no such account as 'good will' and there never has been one on the books," Rambo pointed out. "That's one of the reasons why it's difficult to answer these questions about the \$35,000—anyone who saw 'good will' on the books saw pink elephants too."

The auditor quoted official reports of W. H. Klusman's contributions to the discussion about the water department purchase and said:

"They are exemplary of the many statements made in this council, of the many direct remarks, innuendoes, inferences by members of this council which amount to childish prattle. It's a pitiful thing to realize that the confidence which the public has placed in councilmen in this time of serious economic and business problems has been sacrificed for such absurd comment as the records of this council's recent meetings reveal."

Says Public's Confidence Violated
"Another thing I cannot understand," Rambo went on, "is that when trust has been placed in councilmen, permitting them to rehabilitate themselves and raise themselves in a community why they have to dissipate those opportunities and then have the nerve to ask the people to reinstate them in their confidence."

Although Rambo did not name the councilman or councilmen to whom he was referring in this "straight-from-the-shoulder" opinion, the identities were not overlooked by those in the audience who knew the records of members of the council—both past and present.

The auditor proceeded to expose the changes and alteration in the court records as reported in detail earlier and followed his blackboard demonstration of how these were effected with this statement:

Urges Council to Investigate Three Matters
"After the first request by the city council to the district attorney's office for an investigation, this following two special audits of the judge's records, and discussion by members of this council many times with the district attorney and grand jury, the matter was disposed of by this letter, dated June 12, 1940:

"City Clerk:
"Referring to your letter rec'd by the Grand Jury on May 22, 1940: After going over the matter carefully, including the hearing of witnesses and taking of evidence, we have concluded that this is not a matter that warrants further consideration by the Grand Jury. Signed: L. A. County Grand Jury, By Helen Guzzardi, secretary."

"At the time that letter was written and up to the latter part of September, 1940 when I completed our last audit for the city there was no evidence of any changes or alterations on the court records," Rambo pointed out. "Why then, during all the investigations and audits over a period of months, were these changes not discovered when they were clear and unmistakable? This is a matter which warrants investigation by this council."

"And I would suggest another inquiry subject, partly in view of the willful and felonious changes and alterations resulting in attempted prosecution and long persecution of your former judge. Why, on May 13, 1941, could Councilman Powell produce one of those court dockets in his possession in this council room? Those records are not supposed to be out of the custody and complete charge of the court, at any time."

"Another matter for your inquiry, if the members of this council are honest with themselves and their public, is to find out why your recent auditor (Logan B. Cotton) failed to tell you the truth as I have about your altered records? As an auditor, I'd be so ashamed to have overlooked such apparent changes that I'd never show myself in public again."

Mere Boys Among German Prisoners Captured by Russians in War



German blitz usually moves so rapidly that invaded country hasn't time for taking prisoners; apparently the situation is different in Russia. This radio picture from Moscow shows captured Germans, according to Soviet-approved caption. Note many of prisoners are mere boys.

"Unless it's a question of that man being a political tool of three members of your council you'll investigate and request further investigation by the district attorney's office of this matter," Rambo concluded.

Powell Reverts Back to Grand Jury Probe
Throughout his lengthy statement, there was no interruption. No one made any effort to stop Rambo or question him. As he finished his expose of the court records, a burst of prolonged applause came from the audience. Then Councilman Powell said:

"Referring to the auditor's (Cotton) ability, I'm not qualified to speak. We have always taken our auditor's reports without question. You have made a fairly good case—apparently," Powell continued. "For your benefit and others here I have the four men (referring to the council) who sat in the grand jury room in Los Angeles and heard Mr. Haan (Superior Judge Haan, foreman of the 1940 grand jury) make a statement, along the lines of the letter you have read from the grand jury."

"I'm going to quote Mayor McGuire. He asked Haan: 'As Mayor of Torrance we would like a letter from you absolving the accused (Lessing) as charged in this case.' Haan said 'we cannot give you any such letter. There's a breach of the law by Lessing in office as judge.'"

"One day I was talking to McGuire out in front of his house sitting in a car. I asked if he knew of a shortage in the judge's department and he said it was something over \$900. Later, according to evidence, there was restitution of \$1,239. Certainly there's a serious mistake somewhere—who is responsible? I am willing to let the people be the judge," Powell concluded. (A few Powell supporters who had jabbered together throughout Rambo's talk, applauded loudly.)

Lessing Never "Paid Back" One Dime
Murray said: "There seems to be a question of the auditor's reports. We should have Mr. Cotton in here at the next regular meeting, giving him a copy of the minutes tonight and ask him to clarify his report. One auditor looks the same as another to me—they're just mechanical men with figures."

It remained for a woman spectator in the audience to ask a question that resulted in another revealing statement by Auditor Rambo. The woman said, in part: "If Lessing wasn't guilty, why did he replace the money?"

"Lessing never paid one dime back and there is no evidence he had ever taken anything to pay back," Rambo said slowly and distinctly.

"This reference to a sum of \$1,200 has evidently been troubling a lot of people unnecessarily," he continued. "That is by far the greater amount taken in currently during the month it was received. We found the police had collected fines and bail on behalf of the court and had turned the money over to the court but without a record being made. It was the court's responsibility to receive the money. The court records were in error whenever the turn-in of money was late. But current collections of the court were promptly recorded."

"In case of errors in the department, is it or is it not ethical to make a report to the mayor or is it more ethical to make it to the council as a body?" Powell wanted to know.

Rambo Tells Duties of an Auditor
"If there is any evidence of an actual shortage, it is the duty of the auditor to present the report to the city council through the city clerk," Rambo answered. "If, as in this case, money was collected and we could not pin irregularities in bookkeeping down on anyone, it is not ethical to make such instances public. We did report our findings to the mayor and finance committee of the council. It is the duty of the auditor, Mr. Powell, to protect you or any other public official from unfair practices, from baseless rumor, don't you agree?"

"Yes, that's right," Powell responded.
"It's also the duty of the auditor to expose tactics like that up there (pointing to the blackboard on which he had given examples of how figures in the court records were altered) tactics designed to make someone a criminal," Rambo continued. "There has been a gross misuse of the terms 'shortage' and 'irregularity' in this council."

"How do you explain Haan's statement to us?" Powell inquired.
"Well, Mr. Powell, I can't tell what is in a man's mind and I was not present when Judge Haan made that asserted statement but I could tell you what one of the district attorney's staff said about two members of this council but I don't think it is essential or of any value, do you?" Rambo asked. Powell did not press for the information.

Murray then injected this question: "You informed the mayor and finance committee of the irregularity at the time?" and Rambo said he did. Murray turned to Mayor McGuire and asked: "I asked you if you had ever seen an audit by Rambo on the court matter and you said you had—did that correct?"

Won't Depend on "Pages of Memory"
McGuire said that was correct and Murray continued: "You said Bill Tolson (McGuire's predecessor as mayor) told you about it."

"That's correct," McGuire responded. "We depend on our auditor. We are not qualified for this technical work." Councilman Babeck entered the discussion for the first

Absentee Ballots for Recall Election Now Available

Registered voters who anticipate being away from Torrance on the recall election day, July 29, may now make arrangements at the city clerk's office for casting ballots, it was announced by A. H. Bartlett, city clerk today.

Those wishing to cast absentee ballots are required to file an application for the same, stating the reason for their anticipated absence on election day. They will then be sent an absentee ballot by registered mail to the address at which they expect to be on election day. This ballot must be presented before a notary or city or council official qualified to certify to the same, and the marking of the ballot done in the presence of the officer administering the oath, Bartlett explained.

Sample ballots were mailed this week to all registered voters in Torrance.

time with this question: "Just prior to this time (evidently meaning when Mayor Tolson was in office) there were several months with no payment to the clerk's office from the judge, isn't that true?"

Rambo replied that he could not remember, stating that the facts were available in the city records but he could not recall amounts and times of payments after several years passed and that "it is foolish to read from the pages of memory alone in matters of this kind."

With that, the discussion ended, probably to be resumed after the July 29 recall election on August 12 when City Auditor Logan R. Cotton is expected to be present and explain why he did not reveal the changes and alterations in the court records.

H. C. Plant is Being Readied for Production

The old sulphur plant in Harbor City is being remodeled and machinery is being installed for the Calloy Co., according to J. L. Glanville, who is in charge of operations.

Glanville, who with a crew of men, started overhauling the plant the past week, states that the company expects to begin operations as soon as the plant is in shape on contracts for the government making alloys for armor plate and aircraft use.

Principal alloy is beryllium oxide, a hardening medium, and it is expected that from 1,000 to 3,000 pounds a week will be shipped from the local plant. Grinding machinery has already been installed in part of the plant and ore will be shipped here from South Dakota.

The alloy is used with copper, iron and nickel and quantities of it are needed in aircraft manufacture.

Heavy machinery is now being moved to Harbor City and the old spur tracks, long out of use, are being repaired.

Much of the product will go to aircraft plants in Southern California.

Giannini Visits Bank Staff Here

Individually greeting all members of the staff, A. P. Giannini, chairman of the board of the Bank of America, visited the Torrance branch yesterday afternoon. It was his first visit here since 1937. Giannini devotes much of his time to calling on the branches of the far-flung banking institution he founded and he revealed a keen interest in the growth and progress of Torrance during his stay here.

New Directory Being Compiled for Fall Issue

Work of compiling data for a new Torrance city directory was begun this week by representatives of the Western Directory Company. This is the same organization that issued the last Torrance directory, which was universally acclaimed as the most complete and accurate listing that has ever been issued in Torrance.

"Our last directory for Torrance was distributed in 1940," said Grover Inskip, president of Western Directory Company.

"Because of the growth of this city and the many changes that have occurred in both the residential and business districts, this old directory has become quite obsolete," he added.

It is expected that the new book will be ready for distribution in November, and sufficient copies will be printed to give, without charge, one to every resident and business house in Torrance. Typesetting and printing of the new directory will be done at the Torrance Herald plant.

Blue cards, designating approval of the Torrance Business Men's Association, have been issued to advertising representatives of the Western Directory Company, who are now calling on business houses.

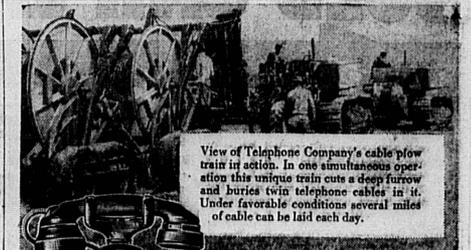
ADOPT AMENDMENTS
An amendment to the City Civil Service ordinance, creating a personnel board and giving the terms of its five members, was adopted by the city council on Tuesday.

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It's America, 1941

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FIRST MATE BOB and Crew of Good Ship "Grace" at Anchor in Civic Auditorium Sunday, July 27, 5-6 p.m.
Auspices Central Evangelical Church. All Welcome.